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FloorPrep
Legislative Digest

Tuesday, February 13, 2001

*The House will meet at 2:00 p.m. for Legislative Business.
(No votes expected before 6:00 p.m.)*

Anticipated Floor Action:

H.Res. 34—Congratulating the Prime Minister-elect of Israel

H.R. 2—Social Security and Medicare Lockbox Act of 2001



Bills to be Considered Under Suspension of the Rules:

Floor Situation: The House is scheduled to consider two bills under suspension of the rules as its only order of business. Each is debatable for forty minutes, may not be amended, and require a two-thirds majority vote for passage.

H. Res. 34 commends the people of Israel for conducting a free and fair election on February 6, 2001. The resolution declares that the election of Ariel Sharon is an example of Israel's commitment to democracy. It calls on Prime Minister-elect Sharon and Palestinian Chairman Yasser Arafat to use their influence to end the violence in the Middle East. The resolution affirms the close bonds of friendship between Israel and the United States, and restates the commitment of the Congress for peace and security in Israel. Mr. Hyde will introduce the measure today. This resolution has not been considered by a committee.

H.R. 2, The Social Security and Medicare Lockbox Act of 2001, amends the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to prevent the surpluses of the Social Security and Medicare Part A, Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund (as assumed in the most recently agreed to budget resolution), from being used for any purpose other than providing retirement and health security. The bill uses any Social Security or Medicare Part A surpluses to pay down the national public debt until such time as Medicare and Social Security reform legislation is enacted. The bill amends the Budget Act of 1974 to allow a point of order to protect Social Security and Medicare Part A surpluses in the House and in the Senate against any resolution, bill, motion, joint resolution, conference report or amendment whose enactment would cause the on-budget surplus to be less than the surplus of the

Medicare Part A surplus for the same given year. The bill makes an exception to this point for Social Security and Medicare reform legislation.

The bill also makes it out of order in either body to consider any budget resolution, bill, joint resolution, conference report or amendment whose enactment would cause an on-budget surplus for any fiscal year to be less than the projected surplus of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund (as assumed in the most recently agreed to budget resolution) for that fiscal year. Finally, the bill authorizes a waiver or suspension in the Senate of points of order under this bill (the Social Security and Medicare Lockbox Act of 2001) only with a three-fifths majority. At press time, CBO had not released a cost estimate. Similar legislation, H.R. 3859, passed the House by a vote of 420-2 on June 20, 2000.



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